

THE WAR—AND AFTER

A Theosophist's Viewpoint

BY

C. JINARĀJADĀSA

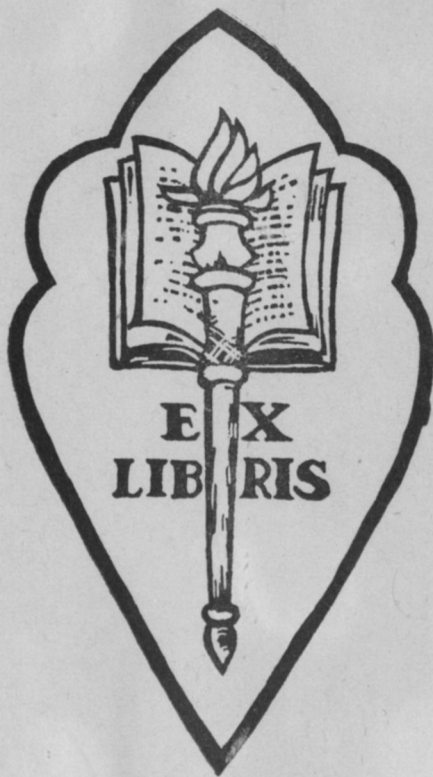
Vice-President of The Theosophical Society, 1921-1928

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THE WAR—AND AFTER

FOR the second time within twenty-five years, a war has begun, which in its ruthlessness and violence, is unparalleled in history. There are many who ask; But why? Is there no Divinity who shapes our ends so that men at the peak of civilisation are prevented from slaughtering each other as if they were but dwellers in the jungle?

Theosophy offers an answer to this question for those who care to examine it. In explanation of a Theosophist's view of all war, and particularly of this war, I shall of course assert certain premisses, lay down certain axioms; the reader may well question if I am not assuming a great deal without proof. I ask him to leave aside for a moment the question of proof, and to examine what develops from my axioms.

It is the assertion of Theosophy that nothing happens by chance, and that whatever happens is only the result of an antecedent cause. There is a Will to Truth, Beauty, and Happiness behind Evolution. We can call that Will by any name we choose—God, Divine Law, or “the sense of an Eternal Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness.”

Theosophy asserts also that there is a governance of the world by Perfected Men who embody the Divine Will or Law. They form a body of directors, guides, and protectors of Humanity, and they are termed the Great Hierarchy of the Masters of the Wisdom. To the Theosophist who believes in the Masters of the Wisdom, there are no chance happenings in the world. Earthquakes, devastations by sea and flood, wars, famines, all these happenings are not just events noted by the Masters. Once the cause is known, the effect can be forecast. Therefore the Masters who know what are the accumulations of the evil Karma generated by mankind, know that disaster and tragedy in various forms must be reaped by mankind. Since Karma cannot be annihilated, their task throughout the ages is to guide the forces of Karma so that they may do as little damage as possible to the plans for human betterment. Karma, which is generated by individuals, as also by masses of individuals like nations, can operate only through

individuals and through nations. To guide the forces of Karma means to shape individuals and nations to become the recipients of the Karma, good and evil, created by them, and yet grow into something better. I will suggest to you by a simile what happens.

THE RESERVOIR OF GOOD AND EVIL.

Where a reservoir of water exists at any height, the water must eventually come down to the plain in one of two ways, first, through a number of little channels or rivulets, or secondly, by the reservoir giving way and creating a devastating flood. So long as the little channels function, all is well. But if the channels should become clogged, and especially if the height of the water should rise through unexpected rains, the reservoir breaks, and disaster is the lot of those who live in the path of its flood waters.

Mankind, unhappily, has a vast reservoir of evil Karma, the accumulation of ages. During each generation, the level of this reservoir is lessened by discharge through periodic calamities and disasters which man attributes to an unfeeling and merciless Providence. Why is it that when science has curbed various diseases, new forms of disease appear? If tuberculosis is lessening, cancer is increasing. There never was a time when nature was so obedient to man. The world's wealth has grown; and yet, during the last years, why do so many millions suffer acutely for want of employment? Mankind has more wealth and more health, more schools, more books, more means of enjoyment than ever before; and yet, at the same time, more causes and occasions for hatred. To return to my simile, while the reservoir's level is lessened by its water being discharged to generate our usual calamities, its height is being steadily raised by the creation of new hatreds among men. The resultant breaking of the reservoir is war.

War may affect only two nations; in that case only their two national Karmas are involved. But sometimes many nations are involved as in the last war of 1914-1918. Though only twenty-seven nations among the Allies and four among the Central Powers were at war then, every non-combatant nation in the world was dragged into the issue, for the whole world suffered through ruin to trade.

The Masters are not omnipotent. Though their compassion is vast and is the same towards all who suffer irrespective of race or religion, yet they can work only with the forces generated by man. They may here dam up one channel of evil Karma, there widen one of good; they can adjust and balance, but cannot destroy a single particle of Karma.

They try to counterbalance the reservoir of evil by adding to the reservoir of good. From among them come the Founders of the religions. Each religion aims at intensifying the capacity for good action in each man. But it is only for a while that a religion produces the full result intended. Soon a religion becomes rigid; it stresses the outer form and not the inner life; vested interests of priesthoods make of religion a mechanical creed.

While religion becomes slowly stereotyped, rigid, a matter of formal observance and not a life of the heart and mind, the reservoir of evil grows. Not that religion actively encourages evil, but it does so passively by refusing to control abuses. All the evils which add to the reservoir of evil can be described in one word—cruelty.

Innumerable are the forms which men have discovered of hurting each other, and of being cruel to the lower orders of creation. Dr. G. S. Arundale, President of The Theosophical Society, has lately listed many causes of cruelty, and he has specially stressed the cruelty to animals in flesh eating, and in the slaughter of animals and birds for decoration.

Wherever hatred and bitterness are generated, the reservoir of calamity is added to. Think, in India, of the resentment of the lower castes against the privileged positions of the higher. Think for how many thousands of years Indians have added to India's evil reservoir by the resentment of the outcaste millions against all the caste millions. Can you wonder that there should be in India famines and floods, and the periodical outbreak in various localities of religious and communal riots? The high level of this evil reservoir must be lowered, unless some day all India is to be overwhelmed in some vast and horrible calamity.

Against the evil slowly generated by nations, and by mankind as a collectivity, the Masters are ever striving to add to the reservoir of good.

CYCLES IN EVOLUTION.

Now, the forces at work in evolution have cyclic periods of increase and decrease. When many minor cycles converge to make a major cycle, the forces for good or evil are unusually powerful. We are now at a cyclic epoch where the forces of good are converging to make a great climax. This cycle was noted thousands of years ago by the Great Hierarchy ; and so they have planned to use its forces to the uttermost to create a great push forward in men's evolution. The plans were laid thousands of years ago ; in accordance with them, Francis Bacon laid the foundation of the age of scientific research which has created the present era, where mankind controls nature's resources in ways never dreamed of before. Little by little the world has been opened up, and East and West and North and South brought nearer to each other.

Of course, in this process the imperialistic nations of the West in their domination of the native peoples of Asia, Africa, Australasia, and the three Americas have perpetrated incredible barbarities. There are pages in the history of the expansion of Spain, Portugal, Holland, France, England, Germany, the United States, and now Italy, Japan, and Russia, which send through us thrills of horror. While they have done an infinity of evil, they have also done immense good. They have opened up waterways and landways, and now airways. The world has become one economic organisation, as the result of a selfish imperialism not in the least irradiated by any ideals.

INDIA'S ROLE IN RECONSTRUCTION.

This economic world unification has required as one factor that the age-long civilisation of India should be modified. It was not by mere pressure of an imperialistic expansion of the Arab peoples that some of them streamed into India through Afghanistan in the eighth century, and in the course of eleven centuries they and their descendants grew in India to eighty millions of Muhammadan Indians. It was Akbar's dream to create a Hindu-Mussulman united India ; and though he failed, he established a system of land revenue and administration which the British took over when they arrived on the scene.

The coming of the British as merchants was also not by chance.

The Plan for India and for the future World Unity required the introduction into India of forces from the West to rejuvenate and unite India. But for the English language in schools and the bureaucratic administration developed by the British, the present National Consciousness would scarcely have been born. While English arrogance of race and blunders in administration have retarded the great Plan, nevertheless that Plan requires as an essential factor that the British and Indian peoples shall work together in friendship for a common cause, both for the welfare of India and the world.

THE FORCES OF EVIL.

But there is in human affairs a force at work which the ordinary statesman or reformer does not take into account. It is that reservoir of the evil Karma of mankind to which I have referred. Not only does this reservoir of evil exist, there are unhappily those intelligences who find an exhilaration in identifying themselves with evil, and in using it to thwart "God's Plan which is Evolution." I have no time here to describe fully who are these dark intelligences, nor what are their aims and how they work. But in brief, their aim is to intensify individual propensities towards selfishness and evil to such an extent that men shall not co-operate towards the realisation of common aims for good. They employ the dreams of an idealised Totalitarian State in order to make man an obedient slave to the will of a dictator or an oligarchy. Often they produce admirable material conditions, but always at the cost of creating millions of obedient, though often willing, slaves.

As to their methods of working, the general principle is to select as their channels and tools those who, as they hate, feel a new vitality in their thoughts and feelings. On each occasion when anyone of us gives way to hatred, he sends a wireless call to these maleficent intelligences to inform them that he is ready to be the tool in their plans to thwart the Divine Will. What happens to any man who wilfully nurses grievances, and thereby attracts the forces of hatred, happens on a larger scale to nations. Let but a community or a nation take a delight in hating, they become swiftly the tools of the dark intelligences who are ever attempting to clog the machinery of civilisation, and to throw

mankind back into the dark ages of barbarism. They are so astute in their technique that they convince their tools that only the highest good can result in the end for all humanity by methods which are fundamentally evil.

It is only because the Federation of the World is the Plan, that the forces of evil are marshalled to-day against its realisation; and the sad part is that many a nation, as many an individual, whose nature is fundamental goodness, are made into willing tools because of a defect in their temperament. Ambition, jealousy, resentment, all these serve as excellent pivots from which to launch out evil schemes.

EMPIRE BUILDERS OF THE WEST.

Among the nations of the West, many have had their turn at Empire-building—Spain first, then Portugal, Holland, England, France. The British people, for reasons I shall not go into, became well established as an empire—"where the sun never sets" as is the boast of the Briton—ahead of its competitors. Fortunately for the world's peace, the other competitors whom I have mentioned have more or less gracefully accepted the situation. They are resigned to their "place in the sun" without planning to steal the places in the sun of the other competitors.

But unfortunately there have entered on the scene Germany, next Italy, and later Japan, and now Russia. These peoples have a doctrine that the British Empire is falling to pieces, and so they, who find their places in the sun definitely restricted, are planning to enter into and parcel out the British heritage. Hence their strong objection to the idea of a Federated World, with a Council or a League of Nations to administer the world's development as a whole. Germany tried out this dream of hers in 1914; though she failed, she still refuses to face the chief fact that the British Commonwealth of peoples, in spite of its loose organisation, holds together as a unity and shows no signs of decadence. Italy has determined by hook or crook to build an Empire. Japan, too, has a similar dream. Russia, which till lately had only the dream of a dictatorship of the proletariat of all the working classes of the world, who are to impose their will on all the other classes, has now launched out on a conquest of small nations.

THE PLAN OF THE MASTERS.

Such is the world to-day, and the outlook is a serious one for humanity. Now, I mentioned in the beginning that the world is not without guidance. While the Masters cannot prevent the growth of evil, they can counterbalance it in certain ways. Their plan is to mould political and economic happenings in order to convince the nations that the only method to put an end to the world chaos is by a World Federation. Let me narrate how some of us Theosophists heard of this plan of the Great Hierarchy. Information about that plan came to us by stages. The first stage was as follows.

The first broad outline of the plan was explained by C. W. Leadbeater in the year 1901, in an address which he gave in London to the Esoteric School. In July of that year, he described the general plan of the Masters as follows. Having known him intimately, I feel sure that he would not have made the statements which follow, unless he had heard them either from the Masters or from their senior pupils. I quote from a stenographic summary of what he said:

"Part of the great scheme, very shortly to be realised, is the drawing together of the various branches of our fifth sub-race, the Teutonic. We all belong to that—Anglo-Saxons, Scandinavians, Dutch, German, and Americans; some also in France (the Norsemen in Normandy, etc.). A much closer drawing together of all these is to be brought about for a definite purpose."

"But before this [purpose] can come about, we must have got rid of the incubus of war, always hanging over our heads like a great spectre, paralysing the best intellects of all countries as regards social experiments, and making it impossible for our statesmen to try new plans and methods. Therefore one essential towards carrying out the scheme is a period of universal peace. Many efforts have been made in various ways to bring this about, for example, the Peace Conference. Another effort will have to be made."

"The fifth sub-race, then (Americans, Englishmen, Germans, etc.) is to be drawn close together. If we can but put aside little race prejudices and stand side by side, a great work lies before us

in the future. . . . But the majority of our race is by no means ready to respond to a purely unselfish motive as a means of bringing about the universal peace required."

"How can this peace be brought about? By making it to the self-interest of these nations to insist on universal peace. Trade suffers during war. We, the Teutons, are the great trading nations of the world, and we shall shortly realise that it is to our interest to bind ourselves together and to stand for peace. Not a high motive truly is this, a motive of self-interest. But on these and similar or parallel lines the next effort is to be made."

Another stage in our progressive knowledge of the plan of the Great Hierarchy for the world's future came in 1913. It was in that year that the late Annie Besant received from her occult superiors orders to take up political work for India, and to force matters towards the recognition of India by Britain as a Dominion of the British Empire.

INDIA AS A DOMINION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

One might well ask: What has all this to do with World Reconstruction?

The answer is: that World Reconstruction needs that, before its day arrives, the world should have proof that it is practicable for a federation composed of peoples who are white and brown, black and yellow, and of all the conflicting faiths of the world, to work together as a unity, and hold together for a common purpose, in spite of their divergent characteristics. That is the British Empire at the actual moment. That Empire is a model of what sort of a World Federation it is possible to create by all the nations.

Now, this Empire of Britain has not just "happened." Certainly Britons never set out to create an Empire (as Italy is doing); it is against the British grain to set out to do anything with a pre-fixed principle. Their empire just grew, as "Topsy grew." Nevertheless, the growth was not by chance. For the Britons to-day are, in the main, the ancient Romans reincarnated. The consuls and pro-consuls of Rome re-appear as various Colonial governors and administrators, reverting to their old jobs. Rome, in spite of the cruelties inflicted on

many a people, did after all establish the Augustan era of peace that lasted some five centuries and more. The good Karma engendered by the Roman people by establishing a Peace for centuries has given the opportunity to their reincarnated selves to continue that work, in preparation for a World Peace of several thousand years.

But this British Empire is only so in name, without India. And furthermore, unless India, with her 360 millions, consciously co-operates with Britain, the British Empire is just another dictatorship, so far as India is concerned.

Hence then the need that India's political tutelage should cease, and that she should be raised to the position of a free nation, within the Empire, with the status of a Dominion. It is essential to the plan of World Reconstruction that Britain and India should stand side by side as equals in responsibility, though Britain by her experience and by the possession of a powerful navy and trained army, would naturally direct the foreign policies of the British Commonwealth of Free Peoples under the Crown of England.

To this task Annie Besant was called—to force events, so that India might be brought nearer to Dominion Status. She did not see that great dream of hers realised before she passed away. But it was to that end that she worked, with a dash and vigour that were unknown in politics in India till her day. The instructions which she received were precise; they were as follows, received on August 15th, 1915, and written down by her on that day.

“You will have a time of trouble and danger; I need not say, ‘have no fear,’ ‘have no anxiety.’ Do not let opposition become angry. Be firm, but not provocative. Press steadily the preparation for the coming changes, and claim India's place in the Empire. The end will be a great triumph. Do not let it be stained by excess.”

In 1917, Annie Besant was elected the President of the Indian National Congress. Soon after 1918, when Mr. Gandhi entered on the scene, she refused to follow his leadership into the Non-Co-operation Movement, remembering the instructions given: “Do not let it be stained by excess.” When the Indian National Movement came under

the hands of Mr. Gandhi, the excesses which she feared happened, and there are pages in India's history towards Emancipation that are black indeed, because of the *violence* of the "non-violent" movement of Mr. Gandhi.

THE GREAT WAR.

Once again I come to my main thesis, that all events, ghastly and incomprehensible as they appear, like the war of 1914-1918 and the present war, are being shaped towards the goal of ushering in a new era in civilisation, with a World Peace and a World Order. The maleficent forces of opposition will oppose tooth and nail, as they opposed before. Before 1914, they flooded Germany with dreams of naval supremacy and world dominion. Germany increased her navy, and Britain increased hers in response. Germany's army was made powerful, and the reaction on each continental power was that each was forced to follow suit and make its army up-to-date and powerful. It was as if fuel was being gathered by all for a great conflagration; it needed only a tiny match—the murder of a man and a woman—to set everything ablaze.

THE DARK FORCES OVER GERMANY, RUSSIA, ITALY, JAPAN.

It is these dreams now in action which we are witnessing to-day. In 1914 the maleficent forces swept Germany into a whirlpool of hate; deeds were done by German soldiers which justified the loathing expressed in the words Boche and Hun. Yet, in normal times of peace, these were normal German men, who would be repelled by any thought of bestial cruelty. If they did unmentionable deeds, it is only because they ceased to be normal men for the time being, dragged as they were into the whirlpool of the dark forces.

Once again, the same tragedy has overtaken Germany. The subterranean hatred of Jews, which has long existed in Mid-Europe, was fanned to a white-heat flame by their leader; and hatred always opens the door to an obsession which obliterates every landmark between right and wrong, between decent conduct and devilish cruelty.

Herr Hitler has offered in compensation the realisation of the old dream of German world dominion, a dream utterly incompatible with a World Peace and a World Order.

This same whirlpool of hate dragged Russia in; there was so much hate already in the land, owing to the brutalities of the Czarist regime, that the outburst of savagery when the revolution began was as if deep answered deep. A marvellous instrument of the evil forces has Russia become once again, in her deeds in Finland to-day. To some of us, who could appreciate the economic changes that Soviet Russia was achieving, who saw certain elements which Russia could contribute to World Re-organisation, it seems pitiful to note to-day how Soviet Russia, with her gospel of liberation for the proletarian masses of the world, is only the old Czarist Russia in the worst aspects of its oppression.

Into this same disastrous situation Italy has allowed herself to be dragged, at least partially. Her dreams too of building an empire, and making the Mediterranean *mare nostrum*, "our sea," have swept her partly into the whirlpool; and hence her ruthless action in Abyssinia which roused the condemnation of the whole world, and later her persecution of the Jews in partial imitation of Germany. In a similar fashion, too, Japan has been swept into the whirlpool, and her soldiers, so utterly noble in their devotion to their Emperor and country, have done deeds whose record is like the smudge of a black hand across the scene of some lovely kakemono.

THE WEAKNESS OF THE LEAGUE.

Since the day when the United States withdrew her hand from the Great Work a fundamental weakness in the League of Nations grew and grew, till it is the nerveless body of to-day. All the nations who joined the League, as also the United States, have a part in the Karma of the tragedy. When call after call came to the League to *act*, the League first vacillated and then refused. So Italy "took" the Dodecanese Islands from Greece; and Japan entered Manchuria; and Abyssinia was raped and sacrificed; and China invaded and outraged—and the League protested, half-heartedly tried to apply sanctions, but really did nothing, and continued to look on. Then came the turn of

Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, and Poland, though for Poland there stand to-day England and France. As I write, the League is to meet to listen to Finland's plea against Russia.

If little can be done *now*, it is because in the past the League's members played the role of selfish calculating investors, and failed to rouse the consciences of the nations. Every nation could have been led; for in their hearts the people are noble. But the statesmen were myopic, and saw only the near thing, but not what was coming in the distance. They were "penny-wise and pound-foolish." Tennyson saw long ago this tragedy of the statesmen, in the face of great issues which frighten them:

"But the jingling of the guinea heals the hurt that honour feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels."

WHAT CAN WE DO?

What can we do, now that war is upon us? How can we help in this time of catastrophe, to put an end to it now and prevent a similar one in the future?

There is little that we can do, *now*, for the reservoir of evil has given way, and the flood-waters are streaming past in fury. The waters must reach the plain. Nevertheless we can direct *now* how the world shall be reconstructed *rightly* when war ends. We shall help now by *right thinking*.

The first requirement in right thinking is that we shall *not* clamour for peace at once, at all costs, because we feel that all war is an outrage on humanity, and any kind of a peace is better than war. But let us look back a little, to 1918 when peace was made, and further back into all the treaties of peace made in the wars of Europe. Which peace ever established an era of real peace? Each treaty of peace merely proclaimed a breathing space between the war then over and the next war which was inevitably due.

WHY "PEACE" FAILS TO BRING PEACE.

Why does "peace" always fail to give us peace? Why has the peace of 1918 failed?

First, because that peace was not made by those who did most for

it, for they died for it. They died in order that those whom they left behind might make a world *different* from that in which they had lived. But the peace was made by those who survived, but who *did not understand*. They knew but one thing, that peace meant to them to put the world back into its old grooves, into its old ruts, so that the world should continue unchanged. The peace-makers were well-meaning but ignorant, for they believed still in the law of the jungle as the law for human institutions:

“the good old plan
That he should take who has the power,
And he should keep who can.”

They had no glimmering of the truth that war is not the cause of suffering, but the effect of suffering. Truly here the old Hindu saying of the sages reveals the clue which we need in order to understand why wars ever happen. “*The tears of the poor undermine the thrones of kings.*”

The modern statesman has no belief in the eternal fact of nature, that mankind is one whole; how all men are bound together, man with man, white and brown, yellow and black; how he who has many possessions is bound to him who has none; how the hale and hearty is bound to the sick and despairing; the good to the bad, the saint to the sinner; and how all mankind is bound even to the other creations of nature—the animal world, and to the world of the plants and trees. Reckless of the truth of Universal Brotherhood, so-called “civilised man” has built in each people an order of life where the nation is divided into two groups, the haves and the have-nots, and between them, in western lands especially, a chasm which is bridged by patronage from the one side and by resentment from the other.

Who that knew the condition of the English poor when Ebenezer Elliott wrote, and knows now what life is still for millions, will not respond with utter sympathy to his lines:

“Avenge the plundered poor, oh Lord! . . .
But not with sword—no, not with fire
Chastise the British locustry!
Lord, let them feel Thy heavier ire;
Whip them, oh Lord, with poverty!”

THE ANIMAL URGE TO LIFE.

The idea that a man has only one life upon earth, and that he can be "redeemed" from the consequences of the evil which he does by relying upon a Saviour who will "atone" for him, has slowly impelled western civilisation into an era of callous competition. A furious urge is the result; the individual cries out: I *must* be happy, at all costs, for there's no time to be lost; the nation cries out: I *must* be prosperous, at all costs, or I shall go under. This animal urge has created an economic system, first, of cruelty; how many generations has it not taken to pass legislation in England to humanise the conditions of labour in mines and factories? The work is not yet over.

WASTE IN PRODUCTION.

And second, of waste; for the modern economic system is bent upon production and distribution, and has no interest in the question whether a given product *ought* to be produced. What concerns the producer is only that it should sell.

I have before me the picture of a dressing-bag for a man, from a fashionable bag maker; the price is £225, and another for a woman for £165. These two bags will be sold, for there are those who will buy them. But *ought* they to have been manufactured, in a country which has for over a decade now over a million unemployed? How many thousands of homes are there not in England where "the weekly wage is insufficient to procure the food, clothing, and shelter requisite for a healthy life"?* In the city of Bristol alone there are 16,000 children in homes "where the income is inadequate to provide a bare minimum standard of living"; and "16 per cent. of the working-class families covered by the Mersey-side were found to be living in poverty."* And what of the conditions of the poor in the cities of France, Germany, India, China? Throughout the world it is the same.

Is there not somewhere a fundamental waste of brain and muscle of human beings, in the production and distribution of these luxury goods, with the need by millions of the necessities of life?

* *The Times*, article "Family Poverty" by *The Times* Labour Correspondent, December 11th, 1939.

HOW COMMERCE CREATES WAR.

It helps commerce, say the producers. But, since all nations are bent on producing, the result is *war*. We have the truth in G. Lowes Dickinson's words, written in 1901, and put into the mouth of a Chinaman:

"The peoples of Europe fling themselves like hungry beasts of prey on every yet unexploited quarter of the globe. Hitherto they have confined their acts of spoliation to those whom they regard as outside their own pale. But always while they divide the spoil, they watch one another with a jealous eye; sooner or later, when there is nothing left to divide, they will fall upon one another. That is the real meaning of your armaments; you must devour or be devoured. And it is precisely those trade relations which it was thought would knit you in the bonds of peace, which, by making everyone of you cut-throat rivals of the rest, have brought you within reasonable distance of a general war of extermination."

The Great War of 1914-1918 was nearly, but not quite, a war of extermination. Twenty-seven nations as the Allies, and four as the Central Powers fought, slew, and suffered. But what did suffering teach them? To Germany, to begin once again her planned march to world dominion; to the Allies, to continue in the old ruts, developing economic systems of the old pre-war type, with an attempt here and there to improve the lot of the poor and the workers.

PEACE AT ANY PRICE?

No one who has any imagination can desire that war should continue one instant longer than is necessary. For war is the negation of what civilisation has attempted to build. It is avoidable suffering, not only by death and wounds of those who are in battle, but of millions of men, women, and children who have to undergo sacrifices. No one who is in England at the moment can be unfeeling to the tragedy of war. At the moment, unlike the last war, the casualties by death are not listed in tens of thousands, and the wounded are not filling all the hospitals. Yet daily there is the record of the death of sailors of the Navy and Mercantile Marine, and of the awful suffering by exposure of those who

are rescued. The change of the citizen's life to meet the needs of war, the calling up of men into the battle ranks of the army, the navy, and the air force; the enrolment of others, women as well as men, into various corps of helpers, in uniform or without uniform; being on the *qui vive* day and night against air raids and poison gas; the nightly black-out and the discomfort it brings; the evacuation of the children; the restrictions of travel; the cost of living; in a hundred and one ways a new keynote of life is struck for all. All the discomforts are born with resignation, and often with a laugh, making light of things essentially heavy to be borne. Surely it must be the same in France, though in England we get so little news of the re-casting of daily life there under the stress of war. And who can read the paper each day without horror of what Finland has to endure, though borne so heroically? And how a hundredfold more tragic must life be in Germany to anything in England to-day? Who indeed would not desire peace, at once?

Yet all the sacrifices are made cheerfully, not because war is attractive, but because of the hope that the sacrifices of to-day will make future sacrifices unnecessary, when the children grow to be men and women. Every war begun has the aim of preventing another war. But to declare a peace immediately, merely because each day of war continues to add to suffering, is not necessarily the way to prevent future suffering.

THE CRISIS BEFORE MANKIND.

The world to-day is at a parting of the ways. From the days when mankind consisted of savages, their lives have been directed by the strong man, the chieftain, the ruler. The people have been divided into one who dictates and the rest who accept his dictation. On all occasions, the dictator presumes that he embodies the future of his people, that he is the essence of their ability. He trains the citizen to accept the soldier's mentality to obey and not question. Good has been done by these strong men in the past, when they were noble and compassionate; and evil, when their ambitions were first for their glory and last for their people. But the whole conception of the strong man

as the guide and saviour represents the first stage in mankind's progression.

We are at the beginning of the next stage now, when the citizen shall be the citizen first, and only in dire necessity put on the role of the soldier. Mankind is making the new experiment of all men co-operating to produce the greatest good for all. Compared to the brilliant and swift action of many a dictator, democracy seems to achieve little and slowly. Yet the dictator represents the past of mankind and the free people the future. The war to-day is a struggle between the past and the future. There is no question whatever that, for the welfare of mankind, the ideal of the future must be made the victor.

For the strong man ideal touches not only the relation of the citizen to the state as soldier; he infects everything. He coarsens the attitude of the man to the woman; he cramps the possibilities of her rightful self-expression; and the greatest of all crimes against humanity, he gives a horrible twist to education, making the children swiftly insensitive.

Life to-day is impossible, for mankind as a whole, so long as the strong man ideal is not curbed; at the cost of every sacrifice, the order of things represented by him must not be allowed to be the keynote of the future. Through long ages, civilisation has striven to make man a free-willing individual, who in spite of the memories of the brute in him, shall ever be conscious that he is the god; and with the recollections of a god-given nature, to give of his best to his nation, not dictated thereto by another but inspired by himself.

An immediate peace is worth everything, if the children and their children can be assured of the future for which all sacrifices are being made now. Let us be for peace always and in all places, but only for a peace which shall give the god in man the environment which he needs to express his true nature.

THE LESSON FOR ALL NATIONS.

The last war did not make us suffer *enough*, not to the extent of making us seek the cause of suffering. And since as mankind we seem to learn only through suffering, the Karmic results of ill-deeds of callous

hearts and selfish brains during twenty-one years come back to us in the harvest of to-day. This time, neutral after neutral is feeling the ravages of war as they did not last time. The whole world is being dragged into a maelstrom of suffering, so that all nations might learn that, in the doing of evil or good, even if caused by one nation alone, all the nations are involved in the evil or in the good done.

But when this war shall end, shall we have learnt more? Shall we then be ready to work at the common task of creating a new world on a new plan, with a new World Conscience and a new World Economy, and be willing to make the sacrifices necessary? Shall we be willing to sacrifice something of our Nationalism so that all nations may have a trust in each other?

RIGHT THINKING.

The peace we long for cannot come without right thinking upon *everything*. For all facts and events are linked, both as between themselves and also with the facts and events that have been. We understand the true drift of life only in so far as we see it as one whole, the present with the past, and where possible with the future.

A WILL AT WORK.

Theosophy states that in all things and at all times there is a Will at work. It is not a blind purposeless action; it is an Idea suffused with an infinite tenderness, and revealing itself as the wisdom of a perfect plan whose unfoldment is a series of acts of creative beauty. Men call this Idea by many names; they call it God, a Great Architect, or Eternal Law. Whatever be the name, the significant fact is that a purpose directed by a Will operates on all events.

THE AGENTS OF THE WILL.

This Will has created Agents for its operations. Among them are those Perfected Men who are called Masters of the Wisdom. Long ago in past lives they were men and women like ourselves, with our hopes and despairs; but they strove heroically, and at last achieved a union of their wills with the Divine Will. Thenceforth they act as the directors

of evolution, carrying out the Plan of Perfection which the Great Will has decreed.

Each stage in the evolutionary process has been directed by them; no new species arose but they planned its appearance and directed the manner of its coming. No earthquake or tidal wave happens without their fiat; all the movements of men as tribes and nations which history records have taken place under their guidance.

They have not achieved all they have desired, in all that concerns man's evolution. For though they have an iron will which can crush puny man's will, yet they do not do so. Man is a Fragment of Divinity, and so has the right to his self-expression, even if he expresses wrongly and thwarts the Plan. They must then wait till man learns the lesson of Karma, and through suffering is willing to co-operate with the Plan.

There is, for each stage of the world process, whether it relates to the vegetable and animal kingdoms or to man, a plan for that stage. All events are shaped by them to realise the plan. Often they fail, for men are wilful and blind and do not see the one true way; then the directors wait with infinite patience till the next cycle of events gives them another opportunity.

A WORLD FEDERATION DECREED.

This is the stage where the world stands to-day. A World Federation, a Parliament of all Nations, is decreed by the Plan. I have already described what stands in the way of its realisation. Let us now survey what is needed for a reconstruction of the world towards the Plan.

What is needed is a change *in every field of thought and action*. The Plan requires first of all and last of all a Unity; everything therefore in human institutions which stand in the way of Unity must go.

THREE OBSTACLES TO UNITY.

There are three institutions which oppose Unity; they are Religion, Race, and Nationalism. Each religion has the welfare of all humanity as its fundamental basis; nevertheless each religion, in its activities to-day, separates off its adherents from the rest of mankind. Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam, each looks

askance at all the others. None of them visualises all mankind as one whole, unless all men profess a particular faith and no other.

Nature has produced many races among men; they are not all alike in organisation nor in the contributions which they have made to civilisation. Diversity, and not unity, is evident everywhere. Yet, in spite of all differences of colour of skin or texture of hair, all the races are composed of men and women; all are involved in the same struggle for life; all seek happiness, and the tragedy of failing to obtain it is the lot of all. Yet it is noteworthy that this puny plaything of nature is capable of thoughts and feelings that can dominate many an aspect of nature, and where no domination is possible, can sublimate his sufferings till he grows to be a titan and comes to the threshold of Divinity.

Only a few among men have come to this stage, where they remained not of one race but belonged to all mankind. All men, in spite of race, can come to the Unity; what a few have achieved, all can achieve. But only a few have discovered that "race," and "colour" that goes with it, are mere passing phenomena of nature, and that greater than all nature's differences is what has no difference—*Humanity*.

Nationalism, as it is to-day, bars the way to Unity. Yet, in the thought of his nation, his people, his fatherland or motherland, man has discovered within him a fount of heroism and sacrifice. It is only within the last few centuries that Nationalism was born. Love of a land, as a land, as a territory which enshrines the highest in oneself, is of recent date in the modern world. The ancient Greeks had it with regard to each city and state; but as a nation the Greeks were divided. The Romans had it, and the Romans of Italy stamped their nationalism on many a conquered people. India never had it, nor China; and yet both peoples had a unity, derived from their spiritual dreams and achievements. In Europe, for about a thousand years, each territorial group thought of itself as led by a man, a king or a lord; the thought of land made its appearance slowly. There has never been among the Arabs any Nationalism of territory; it has always been the unity of the faithful, in whatever land they may happen to live.

But Nationalism is with us to-day. During the last half-century it

has been born in peoples who never dreamed of Nationalism—Indians, Chinese, Filipinos, Arabs, Burmans. Each group clamours for the symbols of Nationalism—a language, a flag, and “the right to go to hell in its own way.” Just as nature, in her biological manifestations, after continuing long to produce a type which appears fixed, then, all in one generation, mutates, and *per saltum* produces a new variant; something similar is the case with Nationalism. A new variant of human endeavour is born with Nationalism, and he is foolish who ignores this new flowering in human culture. It rouses man to highest sacrifices; but also it can be ruthless and evil, full of a cruel pride which tramples upon those in its way. There is in Nationalism both good and evil. How to preserve the good and eliminate the evil is one of the great problems of humanity.

THE WORK OF THEOSOPHISTS.

It is on these three fundamental problems which bar the road to Unity, and therefore to World Federation, that Theosophists have an especial message. Since the foundation of the Theosophical Society sixty-five years ago, Theosophists have worked without ceasing “To form the Nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, *without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.*” This is the first declared Object of the Society; and Theosophists have worked, and are working in fifty-six countries of the world, towards this objective of uniting mankind. With a philosophy derived from all the philosophies of the past, with truths received from science and art, the Theosophist explains how all men are one in nature, in spite of their differences of race and colour, because every man is an immortal soul, partaking of the life and nature of the Divine, and that therefore all men are brothers, whether they love each other or hate each other. The demarcations which separate mankind into men and women; into white or brown, yellow, or black; into high caste, low caste, or no caste; into upper classes or lower classes; into Christians or Hindus or Buddhists, into Hebrews or Arabs, into Zoroastrians or Confucianists; all these lines of divisions are as the ridges which children build on the sands of the sea-shore in their play; when the tide comes in, they vanish. There is use in each divi-

sion, to the man or woman who understands that such a demarcation gives an opportunity for a closer examination and understanding of the good which lies within its boundaries. But there is evil when the individual entrenches himself within his race, or creed, or sex, or caste, or colour, and looks upon all others as inferior to him, and capable of a lesser good than himself.

FEDERATION CAN BE ACHIEVED.

With the immense wealth of scientific knowledge, with all nature's forces released for us by science; with the immense brain power in the best men and women of the world taken as a whole; with the unlimited wealth of a united world; there are no obstacles to World Unity, except the lack of will to create it. It is possible to give justice to all, to give what each national group clamours for, so long as its freedom does not mean the domination of others. It can be done by a body of men and women of all nations who are eager for World Unity, if only the nations will establish such a judicial and administrative body. A Central Board of Commerce, a Central World Bank, a Central Police Force with its air, army, and navy; a Central Medical Board; a Central Board of Trustees of Backward Peoples—all these institutions and others similar can be organised. They will succeed, provided all the brains of the world are pooled to make a success of the endeavour. The day cannot be so far off when the words "politics," "statesmen," "ministers," and similar labels of our backward world will drop out of use as meaningless. There is not a single problem which cannot be solved, provided *all* the nations have goodwill.

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